

Fort Lewis, country prepare for Veterans Day

American veterans to be honored nationally Tuesday

By Steven Field
Northwest Guardian

As nearly 4,000 Soldiers from 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, get ready to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Soldiers and families back at Fort Lewis will pay tribute to those whose footsteps they follow.

Millions of people around the world will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Veterans Day this Tuesday, honoring Soldiers who served in the armed forces.

"Veterans are the people who make it possible for this country to do what it does. We are the foundation of our great democracy," said David Foster, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program. Foster retired after 21 years in the Air Force.

"Veterans Day is a great time for citizens to reflect on that and say thank you to veterans," he said.

In honor of Veterans Day, Soldiers will

have a four-day weekend Saturday to Tuesday. DA civilians will have the federal holiday on Tuesday off, and a liberal leave policy is in effect for Monday.

In 1954, President Eisenhower changed the name of the holiday from Armistice Day. The holiday originally commemorated the ceasefire of World War I, which was said to be the war that ended all wars. To recognize Soldiers who served in World War II as well, the more encompassing name of Veterans Day was chosen.

The intent behind the name change is reflected in the theme of Veterans Day — "Honoring All Who Served."

The national celebrity spokesperson for Veterans Day this year is Jennifer Love Hewitt. As the star of TV's "Party of Five" and films such as "The Tuxedo" and "Can't Hardly Wait," she will visit VA hospitals and talk to school-age children nationwide as spokesperson. She will also be producing public service announcements promoting awareness of veterans' issues.

"I want to show the kids of America that veterans are not just grandparents,

Veterans by the numbers

26.4 million: The number of military veterans in the United States.

7: The number of states with more than 1 million veterans including California (2.6 million), Florida (1.9 million), Texas (1.8 million), New York (1.4 million), Pennsylvania (1.3 million), Ohio (1.1 million) and Illinois (1.0 million).

1.6 million: The number of veterans who are women.

9.7 million: The number of veterans who are age 65 or over.

5.6 percent: The poverty rate among

veterans, lower than the 10.9 percent of the adults in general in poverty.

57.4: Median age of American veterans.

2.6 million: The number of African American veterans.

1.1 million: The number of Hispanic veterans.

17: The percentage of Alaska residents 18 and over who are veterans, the highest rate in the country.

(Editor's Note: Information obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs Web site at www.va.gov/vetsday.)

uncles and aunts; they're our classmates, neighbors and friends," Hewitt said. "Veterans deserve our utmost respect and admiration for the sacrifices they have made for each and every one of us."

Nationally, the commemoration will feature a wreath-laying ceremony at

Arlington National Cemetery, Va.; an observance at the Vietnam Memorial Wall in the nation's capital; a Veterans Day 10k race through Washington, D.C.; and events in several major cities, including Houston and Los Angeles, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Events throughout the Puget Sound honoring veterans began Tuesday and will continue through next Tuesday.

Some of the events include:

- VA Puget Sound Health Care System Veterans Day Ceremony today, 1:30 p.m., Lakewood;
- Auburn Veterans Day Parade Saturday, 10 a.m., Auburn, Wash.;
- Tahoma National Cemetery Ceremony Tuesday, 11 a.m., Kent, Wash.;
- Evergreen-Washelli Cemetery Veterans Day Observance Tuesday, 11 a.m., Seattle; and
- Veterans Eat Free Day at McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurants Tuesday.

There are many things that people on post can do on a personal level to celebrate Veterans Day, Foster said.

Showing support for veterans can be as simple as displaying the colors, taking some time to reflect on our country and the freedoms protected by men and women in uniform, or going to local events to show support, he said.

For information, visit www.dva.wa.gov or www.va.gov.

Post Volunteer of the Month edits newsletter

Job related to college degree offers way to maintain skills

By Barbara L. Sellers
Northwest Guardian

Volunteering as the editor of the Health Services Auxiliary's newsletter, *The Heartbeat*, is one way to do something related to her bachelor's degree in English, said Tina Doane, Fort Lewis Volunteer of the Month for November.

"It's a great opportunity to meet new people in the military community and maintain my editorial skills at the same time," said Doane, wife of Capt. Mark Doane, Family Practice Clinic, Madigan Army Medical Center.

"I feel honored to be a part of such a special group of people," she said. "Everybody is open to new ideas and, as a new volunteer, there's a lot I can learn from other volunteers and military spouses who have so much experience."



Doane

Although Doane already knew about HSA when she first came here, she wasn't able to volunteer at that time because she had a full-time job. Before that, she worked as a copywriter in advertising. Now she's a real estate agent.

"When I got into real estate, it gave me the flexibility I needed to become a volunteer," she said. "I never really had an opportunity to volunteer before because I've worked since I was 15."

Working and attending the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va., where she grew up, usually kept her pretty busy, Doane said.

"One thing I enjoy about being the HSA newsletter editor is being able to take an active role in increasing the number of paid advertisements we get," she said. "Knowing that I have been able to help to increase our revenue gives me a lot of satisfaction. The amount of money HSA was able to give away last year is just amazing."

In addition to various HSA fundraisers throughout the year, including a basket auction, the nonprofit organization sells ads that run in the newsletter, and according to Linda Eskew, hospitality and outreach standing committee member, Doane has contributed significantly to that effort as well.

"She has recruited new members, and many new advertisers," Eskew said. "(Doane) is an asset to the Health Services Auxiliary and serves with compassion. She came into our organization with such energy and enthusiasm. When asked to help with any project, (Doane) jumps at the opportunity."

It's always worthwhile for everyone to support an organization that does so much good in the community, said Doane, who took over the newsletter in August.

"Seeing the finished product, the fruit of my labor, gives me a lot of satisfaction," she said.

Other members of the Health Services Auxiliary also appreciate Doane's work.

"We are very lucky to have her," said Mary Andolsek, president of HSA. "(Doane) is extremely professional and organized, and she meets all of her deadlines. We're all very proud of her."

Doane can always be counted on to get the job done and get it done extremely well, Eskew said.

"(Doane) pours her heart into our newsletter," she added. "Each month she produces an attractive, informative and fun newsletter. I think the world of (Doane)."

Recently, Doane has also been trying to find ways to cut printing costs.

"We are always looking for more ways to cut costs," she said. "The less money we have to pay out of our budget, the more money we have for various welfare requests to give back to the military community."

As long as she remains in the area, she plans to remain involved with HSA in some capacity, Doane said.

"It has been a great experience so far," she said. "Everybody is very supportive of each other. It's not all work and no play. We do have fun together, too."



Spc. Steven J. Schneider

(From left) Lt. Gen. Edward Soriano and Brig. Gen. Daniel P. Coffey look on as Col. James E. Kelly speaks after taking command of the 66th Aviation Brigade from Coffey Sunday.

Aviation brigade changes command Sunday

66th Aviation Brigade says goodbye to Army careerist

Spc. Steven J. Schneider
Northwest Guardian

The official party arrived in a Huey. That's how the 66th Aviation Brigade change of command ceremony began at the Army Aviation Flight Facility 1 Sunday.

Brig. Gen. Daniel P. Coffey ended his 33-year military career by relinquishing command to Col. James E. Kelly.

"This is a bittersweet day for the brigade," said Lt. Gen. Edward Soriano, 1st Corps and Fort Lewis commander.

In his remarks to attendees at the ceremony, Coffey said he saw great changes in the Army during his career.

"The contrast of the Army of the '70s and now is extreme," Coffey said.

The new Army is a fantastic organization, and Coffey said he hopes the troops of the 66th will continue to be a "truly professional warfighting organization."

Coffey received a Legion of Merit at the ceremony for his selfless service and dedication to the Army.

"This is our time to pay tribute to (Coffey's) service," Soriano said. "Everybody who has served or had a family member who's served knows the meaning of the word sacrifice."

Lt. Gen. Edward Soriano

"This is our time to pay tribute to (Coffey's) service. Everybody who has served or had a family member who's served knows the meaning of the word sacrifice."

the best we could find," Coffey said. "I think we've achieved that goal."

Kelly's experience at every level of command makes him more than ready to take on this new mission, Soriano said.

"Taking charge of this brigade is a humbling challenge," Kelly said.

It's a challenge in good hands, Soriano said.

"I have every confidence that his leadership and experience will be the key to the continued success of the 66th Aviation Brigade," said Soriano. "He's a leader who takes care of Soldiers and their families."

But Coffey's effect on the unit will live on.

"The mentorship he (Coffey) pro-

vided will pass long beyond the changing of the colors today," Soriano said.

At the end of his career, Coffey's awards and decorations include the Senior Army Aviator Badge, the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Air Medal with second device, the Army Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters and the Vietnam Service Medal.

Kelly's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star with one oak leaf cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Air Medal with "V" device and numeral 27, the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device and four oak leaf clusters, the National Defense Service Ribbon with a bronze star, the Vietnam Service Medal with two bronze stars, the Humanitarian Service Medal with two bronze stars, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with 60 device and the Master Aviator Badge.

Officer's Spouse's Club host holiday bazaar over weekend

Annual event proceeds go to community organizations

By Spc. Alfredo Jimenez
28th Public Affairs Detachment

Fort Lewis families had a chance to browse through many holiday items last weekend at the annual holiday bazaar at Jensen Gym.

The event, hosted by the Officer's Spouse's Club, saw more than 75 different vendors take part as a throng of people flooded through the doors.

"This took more than a year to put together," said Katie Williams, OSC co-chair. "We worked hard to make this a success."

Booths were set up all over the long gymnasium, and customers were eager to see what they offered. Items offered at the two-day event included woodcrafts, military crests, holiday craft items, kitchen accessories and children's clothes and toys.

"We try our best to help and support

these local vendors as best as possible," Williams said. "We thank them for being part of a special event."

"Some of the vendors keep coming back year after year," said Lisa Jones, OSC co-chair. "So that tells us we are doing something right."

Last year's bazaar brought in close to \$14,000, and almost all of it was donated to many local organizations around the local area.

"I wish we could let more people know about the bazaar," Jones said. "That way we could raise more money for distribution. So you see, everybody wins."

Some organizations that will receive proceeds from this year's bazaar include the American Red Cross, Army Community Services, Book Patch Library, Fisher House and Boy Scouts.

"We've had a lot of shoppers this weekend and that energizes us very much," said Debra Pontius, OSC president. "It's an excellent idea to have this here on post because it gives the community a chance to get a start on their Christmas shopping."



Spc. Alfredo Jimenez Jr.

Fort Lewis patrons browse through wooden picture frames. The annual Officer's Spouse's Club holiday bazaar lasted two days at Jensen Gym this year.

Pontius also said the event would not be possible if it weren't for all the people volunteering at the event.

"They are the people who make it happen," she said. "A lot of work is done that is not seen, but very appreciated."